

Joel Roberts Poinsett to Andrew Jackson, November 29, 1832, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOEL R. POINSETT TO JACKSON.

Charleston, November 29, 1832.

Confidential

Dear Sir, The deep interest I know you feel in the situation of this state induces me to write to you without hesitation or reserve as often as there is any thing of interest to communicate. The violent measures adopted by the nullifiers have roused the indignation of a great many of their opponents, but it cannot be disguised, that some of them have been intimidated by them. The party will meet on the second monday in December and we will use our best efforts to excite them to do their duty. In any event I do not [*sic*] believe, nay I am sure, that they will remain firm in their allegiance to the United States, and I cannot but hope, that many of them will be induced to despise the threats of their Enemies and lend their active aid to crush this rebellion. For my own part no threats, no bills of pains and penalties nor definitions of treason to the state shall stop my course and I believe some brave men will go with me. We had rather die, than submit to the tyranny of such an oligarchy as J. C. Calhoun, James Hamilton, Robt. Y. Hayne and McDuffie and we implore our sister states and the federal govt. to rescue us from these lawless and reckless men.

I am more especially anxious about this because I am aware my friend Col. Drayton does not think with me. He is of opinion, that the United States in Congress will say to us, Let South Carolina go out of the union if she will go, and I am afraid believes this to be the

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best policy which Congress can follow. With great deference for his opinion I think him entirely wrong. If such a course should be adopted the union must be dissolved in all its parts and foreign and domestic wars necessarily ensue. Whereas if these bad men are put down by the strong arm, the union will be cemented by their conduct and by the vigour of the government, and you will earn the imperishable glory of having preserved this great confederacy from destruction. Remember too, that there are 16,000 Americans, your own Countrymen who call upon you to save them from tyranny and oppression. I will not comment upon the ordinance of the convention nor upon the Governor's message, nor the contemplated bills of pains and penalties. They speak for themselves. 16,000 freemen are proscribed and disfranchised by a few ambitious Demagogues. The Ordinances of Charles the tenth were not by half so destructive of personal liberty.

Many of my friends talk of emigrating and leaving these bad men to their fate. I, Sir, shall not do so. I will remain to lead the few brave men, who place confidence in me, and, if we are left unprotected, to sustain them by my example and my determined resistance to the Tyrants who seek to ruin this once glorious Republic. I have been appointed to go to North Carolina, to Virginia and urged even to go to Washington. But this is my post so long as it is surrounded with so much danger. I have strong hopes in the wisdom of Congress, in their patriotism and in your firmness and decision. I explained to you fully in my last sent under cover to the Secretary of the Treasury my views of what ought to be done by the union party and we will do it at all hazards whenever you say it is time to act. I wrote you under cover to Mr. Oliver of Baltimore respecting the forts. But as this is a circuitous route I will propose to you to write under cover to Mr. Mason of Georgetown either the General or his Son John Mason jr. as you may please to direct. If it be judged expedient to change the post master of this City, We would recommend Edward McCrady for that Office.

I am, Dear Sir, very respectfully